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Country programme outline for the Dominican Republic (2003-2006)*

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* The collection and analysis of current data required to present the Executive Board with the most up-to-date information has delayed submission of the present document.

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I. Introduction

1. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework (CCF) for the Dominican Republic, for the period 1997-2001, at its third regular session in September 1997. It was prepared using inputs from the Government, the country review report, and civil society. Other consultations were also held with the government partners and United Nations system agencies within the context of the preparation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA).

2. In August 2000, a new Government assumed office and initiated the formulation of its National Development Plan. Based on this, the Dominican Government and the UNDP Office requested a one-year extension of the CCF to ensure that UNDP support to the strategic areas and priorities established in the National Development Plan are reflected in the new CCF.

II. Situation analysis

3. The Dominican Republic made impressive progress during 1990s in terms of economic growth. The average annual growth for the period 1991-2000 reached 6 per cent, and 7.7 per cent for the last five years. Per capita income, which decreased from US$1,170 to US$860 during 1980-1991, has been growing and reached US$2,211 in 2000. The economy has experienced sustained growth, spurred by an increase in exports of goods and services, reforms to the tax system, deregulation of interest rates and the foreign-exchange system, and a temporary surge in public investment.

4. Nonetheless, according to the most recent data for the Dominican Republic (1998) analysed by the Human Development Report and the CCA, 25.8 per cent of the population, i.e., 2.1 million people, live below the poverty line. It is also estimated that 4 per cent of the population, i.e., 325,000 persons, live in indigent conditions. For female-headed households, indigence is twice that of homes with male heads of household. A more detailed analysis is available in the National Human Development Report and the CCA.

5. Besides poverty, two other major issues represent severe constraints to sustainable human development in the country: weak governance and rapid destruction of natural resources and their productivity. The country is undergoing a process of major public institutional reforms, including reform of the legal constitution, decentralization and strengthening of local governments. The country has just reformed the legal and institutional framework for natural resources and the environment. The new environmental legal framework (Law No. 64-00) was promulgated in August 2000, and the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources was created. These reforms have had strong UNDP support.

III. Results of past cooperation and lessons learned

6. During the CCF, UNDP support was very dynamic in the reform of the State. As can be seen in the 2000 and 2001 results-oriented annual reports, the first CCF for the Dominican Republic contributed to the achievement of important national goals. Major reforms were made through the Modernization and Reform of the State Project, contributing to significant improvement of the public service. A legislative framework for decentralization was adopted and is being implemented.

7. Regarding poverty reduction, the CCF contributed to strengthening micro- and small enterprises, supporting the development of local health systems, and the national programme to prevent and control HIV/AIDS. Important activities related to decentralization of national planning through support to the provincial development councils were also undertaken. Support to achieve sustainable environmental management led to the reform of the legal and institutional framework and more active national involvement in multilateral environmental agreements. As a crosscutting issue, the contribution to the creation of the Ministry for Women, and support for the participatory development of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality were very important.

8. The most important lesson learned for achieving results has been the importance of the consensus-building process at the national level, with the active participation of all sectors of society. Another important element has been the capacity of UNDP to provide rapid and effective response to government needs. Those lessons have helped UNDP Dominican Republic to support the Government in developing its national agenda in the past, and also allowed sustainability of those issues throughout a political transition process.

IV. Proposed programme

9. Based on an analysis of the development situation of the Dominican Republic, the lessons learned from past cooperation and the comparative advantages of UNDP, cooperation priorities will be established. These may be divided into four principal areas: democratic governance, poverty reduction, energy/environment and HIV/AIDS.

10. The current relevance of the thematic areas has been confirmed by a process of participation, consensus and dialogue within the Dominican Government and civil society. Particular attention will be given to bringing the activities into line with the agreements resulting from the major international conferences of the United Nations and improving the coordination of cooperative efforts.

11. For the implementation of the programme, UNDP will agree on proper mechanisms with national authorities to provide policy advice and advisory services. In addition, the UNDP Office in the Dominican Republic is developing with government support a strategy to mobilize resources in its areas of expertise, which enable the office to provide the Government with technical support and the proper execution mechanisms.

12. On democratic governance, UNDP will support the Government in developing its national strategy, emphasizing (a) the reformulation and implementation of its decentralization programme, aimed at improving management capacity and modernizing large towns and local governments; (b) sustainable human development activities at the local level to widen participation in the decision-making process, strengthen capacities of the local government and empower its community; and (c) bilateral projects with Haiti, with a view to strengthening cross-border relations and initiating bilateral development activities along the common border, the most impoverished area of both countries.

13. With regard to poverty reduction, the Government has requested UNDP support to develop its National Poverty Reduction Strategy, whose objective is to enhance people's involvement to improve their living conditions and basic needs and to have access to income-generating activities. The National Poverty Reduction Strategy will be developed through a broad-based consultation process on poverty reduction policies and will involve, in particular, the poor themselves. UNDP will provide policy advice on the matter, utilizing its regional network of experts as well as learned experience from other countries of the region.

14. The Dominican Government, having established a new legal and environmental framework through the Country Office, has requested UNDP support in order to strengthen the new Ministry of Environment. UNDP will contribute to the decentralization of environmental management through the creation and strengthening of local environmental units, which should work in close collaboration with local governments. Sustainable energy, both from hydroelectric and solar sources, will be promoted at the local level and within the tourist sector. Special efforts will be made for action conducive to sustainable environmental management along the Dominican-Haitian border. Bi- (Dominican Republic and Haiti) and tri- (Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic) national programmes will be developed, particularly on issues related to mitigation of natural disasters and of the impact of global climate change.

15. With regard to HIV/AIDS, UNDP will continue to support the thematic group in coordination with other agencies of the system. The Country Office is currently in the process of developing a logical framework at the national level. In addition, the Government has requested UNDP support in the implementation of a World Bank loan. The Government has also submitted a proposal to the Global Funds to obtain financing to fight HIV/AIDS; this proposal includes UNDP participation in its implementation.

16. Therefore, programme management in the future will follow the strategic results framework (SRF) which has been approved and initiated. The timeframe for this is 2003, including the first part of the present country programme outline. New outcomes regarding best practices areas are to be included, by end of May, in the reformulation of the current SRF as well as in the new SRF planning cycle. In addition, upon completion of the CCA, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process will follow. UNDP has provided strong support to this process as well.

UNDP partnership strategy

17. As mentioned, the UNDP Office in the Dominican Republic aims to play an important role towards providing the Government with policy advice at the upstream level. Nonetheless, this broad and complex task requires partnerships to provide political, technical and financial support. As in the past,

outcomes have been achieved and sustained only by coordinated work at the national level throughout a consensus-building process for which UNDP has national recognition as a neutral arena.

18. The key partner in this endeavour is the Dominican Government, especially the Technical Secretariat and the National Planning Office, as well as other relevant Ministries. United Nations agencies as well as the donor community meet on a regular basis. This allows proper coordination of action, enhancing results and increasing long-term impact.

19. The most important partnerships to mention are, at the national level, civil society, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector. UNDP Dominican Republic already has had very positive experiences involving national NGOs working for different sectors, private sector institutions, academia and bilateral agencies, as well as multilateral financial institutions, such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, and the European Union through the Cotunu Agreement.

20. Throughout the coming years, the Country Office should remain an important part of the common national development agenda. UNDP should continue to help to define the common opportunities between the different priorities of the Government, civil society and the international community, emphasizing its areas of expertise: democratic governance, poverty reduction, energy and environment, information and HIV/AIDS.

V. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

21. UNDP will maintain its current management structure built around the four thematic areas, in which UNDP has experience as well as some leadership. Operations have already been re-profiled and streamlined in order to increase efficiency and better serve clients in three broad management areas: (a) policy advice services; (b) development services; and (c) support to the United Nations and the Resident Coordinator.

22. UNDP Dominican Republic has successfully gone through a transformation process, which has been accompanied by training and advisory support in order to develop a healthy office environment. UNDP Dominican Republic has demonstrated the value of its staff, devoting time as well as other resources towards the implementation of these activities. Moreover, the office is now emphasizing the importance of practicing its corporate principles and values within the UNDP Country Office. This support will continue to be given in the near future, and has been accompanied by Headquarters support and financing.

23. With respect to policy advice services, UNDP will continue to channel a significant proportion of its core resources and non-core income into the provision of the best available local and international experts on issues related to resource mobilization, especially in areas related to the provision of policy advice at the upstream level, and the development of government capacities to implement such advice by providing support in implementing programmes and projects financed by international financial institutions as well as the European Union and bilateral donors. In addition, UNDP will continue to focus on helping to build the national capacities needed to manage these large development programmes through intensive training, simplified and pragmatic approaches to the different execution modalities, design of clear exit strategies, and selection of projects with greater impact.

24. Rapid response, objectivity, quality, maximum flexibility and creative approaches to problem solving will serve as the guiding principles for the provision of high quality, timely and objective advice and support services. UNDP should continue to develop new and more efficient delivery mechanisms for its development partners, combining the best that current execution modalities can offer.

25. With reference to UNDP support to the United Nations, perhaps the greatest challenge for the coming cycle will be the finalization of the CCA and the further development of the UNDAF. Within this framework, interagency working capacities will be enhanced, and greater impact is expected to be achieved at the country level by the United Nations system as a whole.

26. The projects will be evaluated during annual meetings among UNDP, the Government and the counterparts involved during monitoring visits; in addition, however, external evaluation will be required when the funds involved so warrant. Furthermore, the Country Office is developing a database, integrating results-based management, which will be used as a management tool to monitor and evaluate programme and project performance.

Annex: Results and resources framework for the Dominican Republic

UNDAF Objective: The UNDAF relevant to the country programme has not yet been elaborated, the framework herein has therefore been prepared based upon UNDP Corporate Goals
UNDP Corporate Goal: Governance; Poverty

UNDP: Strategic areas of support	UNDP: Intended outcomes	Indicators of outcome or purpose	Outputs, including key output indicators, where needed	Resources by strategic area of support/or programme area (in US dollars)
UNDP: Decentralization Policies: Strengthened capacity of key governance institutions and promote an efficient and accountable public sector	Effective legal and policy framework for decentralized authority and management	Adoption and implementation of a legislative framework for decentralization. Base line: In the process of building consensus Target: Legal framework, competency level and territorial organization approved and operational.	Sectorial mechanisms for local development established to improve quality of life and set the basis for Sustainable Human Development (SHD) output indicator: baseline: Strategic Plan of State Decentralization Elaborated and Submitted to the executive Power target: Strategic Plan of State Decentralization approved by National Congress and operational	Regular resources US$ 353,000 Other resources Of which: Government cost-sharing US$ 500,000 Third party c/s plus Trust Funds: US$ 500,000 Total: US$ 1,353,000
Development and implementation of macro and poverty-reduction policies and strategies	National anti-poverty strategy/plan/programme developed through a participatory process involving, in particular, the poor themselves	Government mechanisms/for a planning and monitoring anti-poverty Baseline: A National Human Development Report (NHDR) elaborated for year 2000 Target: Poverty Plan based on NHDR and other tools (i.e. poverty assessment report) approved and being implemented.	Policy to fight poverty is developed on the basis of the recommendations of the NHDR and with UNDP support. Baseline: National Human Development Report for year 2000 elaborated Target: Government request UNDP assistance to establish plan to fight poverty	Regular resources US$ 450,000 Other resources Of which: Government cost-sharing: US$ 4,500,000 Third party c/s plus Trust Funds: US$ 16,497,000 Total: US$ 21,447,000
Access to basic social services and systems for risk management	The national policy framework reformed to achieve universal access to basic services	Increased number of rural and urban population receiving adequate quality basic services Baseline: 20/20 Initiative available but not yet assumed by government Target: 50% of rural and urban population receiving adequate quality basic services	Wider access to access to basic health care services, including prevention and control activities for STD/HIV/AIDS. Baseline: Basic Social Services Provincial networks in the 14 and Private Sectors for the prevention of HIV transmission elaborated and launched Target: At least 30% of provincial communities are participating in the Basic Services Network.	Regular resources US$ 300,000 Other resources Of which: Government cost-sharing: US$ 6,000,000 Third party c/s plus Trust Funds: US$ 79,135,000 Grand total: US $ 85,435,000

UNDP Corporate Goal: Environment, Gender				
UNDP: Strategic areas of support	**UNDP: Intended outcor**	**Indicators of outcome or purpose**	**Outputs, including key output indicators, where needed**	**Resources by strategic area of support/ outcome or programme area (in US dollars)**
National policy, legal and regulatory framework for environmentally sustainable development	A comprehensive approach to environmentally sustainable development integrated in national development planning and linked to poverty reduction.	Adoption by the Government of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) with national implementation targets Baseline: Rio+5 National Report Target: 70% of regional planning offices with sustainable development targets integrated into annual operation plans	Contribution to the adoption by the National Planning Office of main goals of the Dominican Capacity 21 Project Baseline: Main national sustainable development initiatives identified. Technical personnel of new Regional Planning Offices trained and aware of goals of the Dominican Capacity 21 Project Target: Environmental Strategic Plan adopted at least in Regional Planning Offices	Regular resources US$ 300,000 Other resources Of which: Government cost-sharing: US$ 2,447,000 Third party c/s plus Trust Funds: US$ 21,553,000 Total: US$ 24,300,000
National capacity for participation in global conventions and implementation of its conclusions. Regulatory regimes and funding mechanisms for environmentally sustainable development	Global Environment concerns and commitments integrated in national development planning and policy	Adoption by the Government of a National Strategy Plan/ program required by the Biodiversity, Climate Change and/or Desertification Conventions, with national implementation targets Baseline: Conventions ratified. New environmental law and ministry approved and established. Target: 70% of required strategies plans and programmes adopted by the national government	Strengthened national participation on international environmental conventions Baseline: Reorganized national coordination and focal points units Target: National communication for climate change, national biodiversity strategy, and national plan against desertification	Regular resources US$ 300,000 Other resources Of which: Government cost-sharing US$ 1,000,000 Third party c/s plus Trust Funds: US$ 2,000,000 Total: US$ 3,300,000